

# Jolly Phonics



## Parent/Teacher Guide

Jolly Phonics is for children aged 3 to 6



*Jolly Phonics* is a thorough foundation for reading and writing. It uses the **synthetic phonics** method of teaching the letter sounds in a way that is fun and multi-sensory. Children learn how to use the letter sounds to read and write words.

This guide provides background advice for parents and teachers. It explains the principles behind *Jolly Phonics* so that your understanding of the teaching, and your ability to help a child, is much greater.

All the material is suitable for use in school. Much of it is also well suited to use at home; those items have been marked with a \* . The items can be used together, or individually.

*Jolly Phonics* includes learning the irregular or 'tricky words' such as *said*, *was* and *the*. Together with these materials you should also use storybooks.

Parental support is important to all children as they benefit from plenty of praise and encouragement whilst learning. You should be guided by the pace at which your child wants to go. If interest is being lost, leave the teaching for a while and then come back to it later. Not all children find it easy to learn and blend sounds. It is important to remember that this is not because they are unintelligent, but because they have a poor memory for symbols and words. Extra practice will lead to fluency in reading and help your child manage at school.

The **five** basic skills for reading and writing are:

1. Learning the letter sounds
2. Learning letter formation
3. Blending
4. Identifying sounds in words
5. Spelling the tricky words



Although the skills are covered separately in this guide they will all be taught together.

# 1. Learning the letter sounds

In *Jolly Phonics* the 42 main sounds of English are taught, not just the alphabet. The sounds are in seven groups. Some sounds are written with two letters, such as *ee* and *or*. These are called digraphs. *oo* and *th* can each make two different sounds, as in *book* and *moon*, *that* and *three*. To distinguish between these two sounds, the digraph is represented in two forms. This is shown below.

1. s a t i p n
2. c k e h r m d
3. g o u l f b
4. ai j oa ie ee or
5. z w ng v oo oo
6. y x ch sh th th
7. qu ou oi ue er ar

Each sound has an action which helps children remember the letter(s) that represent it. As a child progresses you can point to the letters and see how quickly they can do the action and say the sound. One letter sound can be taught each day. As a child becomes more confident, the actions are no longer necessary. There is a list of all of the letter sounds and their corresponding actions on page 8 of this guide.

Children should learn each letter by its sound, not its name. For example, the letter *a* should be called *a* (as in *ant*) not *ai* (as in *aim*). Similarly, the letter *n* should be *nn* (as in *net*), not *en*. This will help in blending. The names of each letter can follow later.

The letters have not been introduced in alphabetical order. The first group (*s, a, t, i, p, n*) has been chosen because they make more simple three-letter words than any other six letters. The letters *b* and *d* are introduced in different groups to avoid confusion.

Sounds that have more than one way of being written are initially taught in one form only. For example, the sound *ai* (*rain*) is taught first, and then alternatives *a-e* (*gate*) and *ay* (*day*) follow later. Examples can be found in the *Jolly Phonics Word Book*.



## 2. Learning letter formation

It is very important that a child holds their pencil in the correct way.



*The grip is the same for both left- and right-handed children*

The pencil should be held in the 'tripod' grip between the thumb and first two fingers. If a child's hold starts incorrectly, it is very difficult to correct later on.

A child needs to form each letter the correct way. The letter *c* is introduced in the early stages as this forms the basic shape of some other letters, such as *d*. Particular problems to look for are:

- the *o* (the pencil stroke must be anticlockwise, not clockwise),
- *d* (the pencil starts in the middle, not the top),
- there must be an initial downstroke on letters such as *m* and *n*.

The *Jolly Phonics DVD*, *Jolly Stories* and *Finger Phonics* books show the correct formation of each letter. A good guide is to remember that no letter starts on the baseline.

In time a child will need to learn joined-up (cursive) writing. It helps the fluency of writing and improves spelling. When words are written in one movement it is easier to remember the spelling correctly. *Jolly Phonics* uses the Sassoon Infant typeface which is designed for children learning to read and write. Many of the letters (such as *d* and *n*) have an 'exit' stroke at the end to make it easier to

transfer into joined-up writing. (Check your school's policy as many schools do not teach joined-up writing early on)



### 3. Blending



Blending is the process of saying the individual sounds in a word and then running them together to make the word. For example, sounding out *d-o-g* and making *dog*. It is a technique every child will need to learn, and it improves with practice. To start with you should sound out the word and see if a child can hear it, giving the answer if necessary. Some children take longer than others to hear this. The sounds must be said quickly to hear the word. It is easier if the first sound is said slightly louder. Try little and often with words like *b-u-s*, *t-o-p*, *c-a-t* and *h-e-n*. There are lists of suitable words in *The Phonics Handbook* and the *Jolly Phonics Word Book*.

Remember that some sounds (digraphs) are represented by two letters, such as *sh*. Children should sound out the digraph (*sh*), not the individual letters (*s-h*). With practice they will be able to blend the digraph as one sound in a word. So, a word like *rain* should be sounded out *r-ai-n*, and *feet* as *f-ee-t*. This is difficult to begin with and takes practice. The *Jolly Phonics Regular Word Blending Cards* can be used in class to improve this skill.

You will find it helpful to be able to distinguish between a blend (such as *st*) and a digraph (such as *sh*). In a blend the two sounds, *s* and *t* can each be heard. In a digraph this is not so. Compare *mishap* (where both the *s* and *h* are sounded) and *midship* (which has the quite separate *sh* sound). When sounding out a blend, encourage children to say the two sounds as one unit, so *fl-a-g* not *f-l-a-g*. This will lead to greater fluency when reading.

Some words in English have an irregular spelling and cannot be read by blending, such as *said*, *was* and *one*. Unfortunately, many of these are common words. The irregular parts have to be remembered. These are called the 'tricky words'.



## 4. Identifying sounds in words

The easiest way to know how to spell a word is to listen for the sounds in that word. Even with the tricky words an understanding of letter sounds can help.

Start by having your child listen for the first sound in a word. Games like I-Spy are ideal for this. Next try listening for the end sounds, as the middle sound of a word is the hardest to hear.

Begin with simple three-letter words such as *cat* or *hot*. A good idea is to say a word and tap out the sounds. Three taps means three sounds. Say each sound as you tap. Take care with digraphs. The word *fish*, for example, has four letters but only three sounds, *f-i-sh*.

Rhyming games, poems and the *Jolly Songs* also help tune the ears to the sounds in words. Other games to play are:

a) Add a sound: what do I get if I add a *p* to the beginning of *ink*? Answer: *pink*. Other examples are *m-ice*, *b-us*, etc.

b) Take away a sound: what do I get if I take away *p* from *pink*? Answer: *ink*. Other examples as above, and *f-lap*, *s-lip*, *c-rib*, *d-rag*, *p-ant*, *m-end*, *s-top*, *b-end*, *s-t-rip*, etc.

## 5. Spelling the tricky words

There are several ways of learning tricky spellings:

1) Look, Cover, Write and Check. Look at the word to see which bit is tricky. Ask the child to try writing the word in the air saying the letters. Cover the word over and see if the child can write it correctly. Check to make sure.

2) Say it as it sounds. Say the word so each sound is heard. For example, the word *was* is said as ‘wass’, to rhyme with *mass*, the word *Monday* is said as ‘M-on-day’.

3) Mnemonics. The initial letter of each word in a saying gives the correct spelling of a word. For example, *laugh* – Laugh At Ugly Goat’s Hair.

4) Using joined-up (cursive) writing also improves spelling.





# Storybooks

A child will benefit greatly from a love of reading for pleasure. This can come from being read to.



Once a child has begun to learn the letter sounds they will be able to pick them out in words. They should then move on to working out whole words through blending. As a result it is easier if reading begins with storybooks that use simple words. The *Jolly Readers* can be used to provide this progression.

Once there is fluency in reading, the most important skills for a child will be comprehension and the understanding of more words. This can be developed by asking a child questions about a story they have just read.

## About *Jolly Phonics*

*Jolly Phonics* has been developed by Sue Lloyd and Sara Wernham, who were primary/elementary school teachers at Woods Loke Primary School in Lowestoft, England.

Independent studies find that, after one year's teaching, children taught with *Jolly Phonics* have an average reading age around 12 months ahead of their actual age. Their spelling age is usually slightly further ahead. Boys typically do as well as girls.

*Jolly Phonics* is multisensory and has been developed so the adult can use it confidently and easily, even at the end of an exhausting day!

Jolly Learning Ltd is an independent British publisher, founded in 1987.



# The Actions

- s** Weave hand in an *s* shape, like a snake, and say *ssssss*.  
**a** Wiggle fingers above elbow as if ants crawling on you and say *a, a, a*.  
**1 t** Turn head from side to side as if watching tennis and say *t, t, t*.  
**i** Pretend to be a mouse by wriggling fingers at end of nose and squeak *i, i, i*.  
**p** Pretend to puff out candles and say *p, p, p*.  
**n** Make a noise, as if you are a plane – hold arms out and say *nnnnnn*.
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- c k** Raise hands and snap fingers as if playing castanets and say *ck, ck, ck*.  
**e** Pretend to tap an egg on the side of a pan and crack it into the pan, saying *eh, eh, eh*.  
**2 h** Hold hand in front of mouth panting as if you are out of breath and say *h, h, h*.  
**r** Pretend to be a puppy holding a piece of rag, shaking head from side to side, and say *rrrrrr*.  
**m** Rub tummy as if seeing tasty food and say *mmmmmm*.  
**d** Beat hands up and down as if playing a drum and say *d, d, d*.
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- g** Spiral hand down, as if water going down the drain, and say *g, g, g*.  
**o** Pretend to turn light switch on and off and say *o, o; o, o*.  
**3 u** Pretend to be putting up an umbrella and say *u, u, u*.  
**l** Pretend to lick a lollipop and say *llllll*.  
**f** Let hands gently come together as if toy fish deflating, and say *fffff*.  
**b** Pretend to hit a ball with a bat and say *b, b, b*.
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- ai** Cup hand over ear and say *ai, ai, ai*.  
**j** Pretend to wobble on a plate and say *j, j, j*.  
**4 oa** Bring hand over mouth as if you have done something wrong and say *oh!*  
**ie** Stand to attention and salute, saying *ie ie*.  
**ee or** Put hands on head as if ears on a donkey and say *eeyore, eeyore*.
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- z** Put arms out at sides and pretend to be a bee, saying *zzzzzz*.  
**w** Blow on to open hand, as if you are the wind, and say *wh, wh, wh*.  
**5 ng** Imagine you are a weightlifter, and pretend to lift a heavy weight above your head, saying *ng...*  
**v** Pretend to be holding the steering wheel of a van and say *vvvvvv*.  
**oo oo** Move head back and forth as if it is the cuckoo in a cuckoo clock, saying *u, oo; u, oo*. (Little and long oo.)
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- y** Pretend to be eating a yoghurt and say *y, y, y*.  
**x** Pretend to take an x-ray of someone with a camera and say *ks, ks, ks*.  
**6 ch** Move arms at sides as if you are a train and say *ch, ch, ch*.  
**sh** Place index finger over lips and say *shshsh*.  
**th th** Pretend to be naughty clowns and stick out tongue a little for the *th*, and further for the *th* sound (this and thumb).
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- qu** Make a duck's beak with your hands and say *qu, qu, qu*.  
**7 ou** Pretend your finger is a needle and prick thumb saying *ou, ou, ou*.  
**oi** Cup hands around mouth and shout to another boat saying *oi! ship ahoy!*  
**ue** Point to people around you and say *you, you, you*.  
**er** Roll hands over each other like a mixer and say *ererer*.  
**ar** Open mouth wide and say *ah*. (British English)  
Flap hands as if a seal and say *ar, ar, ar*. (Nth Am English)





### Jolly Stories\*

Join the adventures of Inky Mouse and her friends. Follow them through seven stories as they learn the 42 letter sounds. This beautifully illustrated board book has 40 spreads, each covering one or two letter sounds. Each spread has a number of words for reading and for spelling, and Jolly Phonics action. A large letter is embossed, so that it can be felt by children.



### Jolly Phonics CD-ROM\*

Enter the interactive world of Inky Mouse and her friends as they help your child to learn to read and write.

With 20 fun activities, children will be able to practice the five skills in Jolly Phonics. The games come in different levels, easy, medium or hard, ideal for children (ages 3-6 years) at all levels of early reading.



### Jolly Phonics DVD\*

The DVD covers all the letter sounds and the five basic skills for reading and writing. There are fun bonus activities for children, the Using Jolly Phonics footage for adults and a section explaining the letter sounds of English, ideal for those learning English as a foreign or second language.

### Finger Phonics books 1-7\*

Ideal to use with your child after watching the DVD. Each of the seven books deals with one group of letter sounds. Cut-out letter shapes show children's fingers the correct formation, while the actions help them to remember the correct sound.



### Jolly Phonics Workbooks 1-7\*

A fun way for children to build on the skills they've learned. The seven books cover simple letter recognition, joined-up writing and the alternative spellings of the vowels. Strategies for tricky spellings and challenging puzzles for developing phonic skills are also provided. Ages 4+.

### Jolly Songs\*

A collection of songs set to popular tunes for each of the 42 letter sounds in *Jolly Phonics*. These songs are sung by children on the audio CD. Perfect for use at home, one-to-one teaching or small groups. Includes recordings of all the 42 letter sounds.



\* Suitable for use at home

## Jolly Phonics Letter Sound Poster\*

A poster showing the 42 letter sounds, each with a reminder of the action. Useful for home, or classroom revision with older children.



## Stencilets\*

Stencilets help young children with their pencil control and letter formation. They clip the paper firmly in place and are made of durable, washable plastic.



## Jolly Phonics Puppets\*

Bring the *Jolly Phonics* characters of Inky Mouse, Bee and Snake to life with these three soft, plush puppets.

## Jolly Phonics Read and See\*

These themed word books help children practice sounding out and blending once they've learned the letter sounds. An illustration of each word they read is hiding under a flap.



## Jolly Phonics Starter Kit

Everything classroom teachers need to get started with *Jolly Phonics*. A set of materials is contained in a bright carrying case for neat and easy storage:

- *The Phonics Handbook*
- *Jolly Phonics DVD*
- *Jolly Phonics Wall Frieze*
- *Jolly Phonics Cards*
- *JP Tricky Word Wall Flowers*
- *Jolly Phonics Word Book*
- *Finger Phonics Big Books 1-7*
- *Jolly Phonics Letter Sound Strips*
- *JP Alt Spelling & Alphabet Posters*

\*Suitable for use at home

## The Phonics Handbook

The best place to start when teaching *Jolly Phonics* to a class. *The Phonics Handbook* is a complete resource for teaching reading, writing and spelling. With over 100 photocopiable pages, it introduces the 42 main letter sounds. This is followed by activity sheets and games for reading and spelling.

## Jolly Phonics Word Book

A useful bank of words listed according to letter groups, initial and final consonant blends, alternative vowel spellings and tricky words.

## Finger Phonics Big Books 1-7

A set of seven *Finger Phonics* books in Big Book format, for whole class use. The storyline and action appear on each page. The set comes with a wipe-clean plastic sheet for letter formation practice and other exercises.

## Jolly Phonics Wall Frieze

Comes in seven illustrated strips which can be put up together or individually. The strips can also be cut up into separate letter sounds. Measures 9.33m/30' 6" in total length.

## JP Alternative Spelling & Alphabet Posters

A two-poster pack with alternative vowel spellings on one and alphabet letters on the other.

## Jolly Phonics Tricky Word Wall Flowers

This attractive wall display is ideal for teaching and reinforcing tricky words. There are 72 tricky words which can be put up as each word is taught.

## Jolly Phonics Tricky Word Hat

A plush hat that can be used with the Tricky Word Wall Flowers. Includes a bag of 72 small velcro pads for attaching the words.

## Jolly Phonics Cards

Four sets of flashcards suitable for whole-class use:

- Letter sounds and alternative spellings, e.g. *igh*
- Regular blending words, e.g. *bus*
- Blending words with alternative spellings, e.g. *play*
- Tricky words, e.g. *said*

## Jolly Phonics Letter Sound Strips

A spelling aid for each child in class, with the 42 letter sounds on one side and the alternative vowel spellings on the other.

## Jolly Jingles

An enjoyable and interactive way to reinforce the letter sounds and develop reading skills. Each page gives the words to the Jingle, the action for the letter sound(s), and the traditional tune used. Accompanied by an audio CD of the Jingles, sung by Canadian children.

## The Grammar Handbooks 1 and 2

Following on from *Jolly Phonics*, these books introduce grammar, spelling and punctuation for the next two years. There are 36 lessons in each book and lots of photocopiable games and activities. Similar to *The Phonics Handbook*, they include actions for each area of grammar.

## Jolly Grammar Big Books 1 and 2

These large format books allow new grammar concepts, such as verbs, nouns and conjunctions to be taught to the whole class. Each topic has a double-page spread.

new!



### Jolly Readers\*

Interesting storybooks for children who are just ready to read. Controlled vocabulary enables them to read the words from their letter sound knowledge. There are only a few essential tricky words, and these are shown at the back of each book. There are three series, Inky Mouse and Friends, General Fiction and Nonfiction. There are 6 different books in each series pack.

### Jolly Dictionary\*

Designed to help children improve their reading and writing, and become independent learners. The 6,000+ age-appropriate words have carefully selected definitions that children find easy to read and understand. The award-winning *Jolly Dictionary* is beautifully illustrated throughout, often using the *Jolly Phonics* characters to help clarify examples.

- Divided into 4 colour sections to help children learn how to use the dictionary
- A unique Pronunciation Guide for each word using joined digraphs and showing the stress

\* Suitable for use at home



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